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Quality Evaluation of Simultaneous Interpreting Training

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Abstract

With ever-increasing economic and cultural exchanges, simultaneous interpreting has made significant progress. The growing need for interpreters has given rise to a great number of training programs. Currently, the training of professional simultaneous interpreters is available at schools of interpreting and translation such as the Graduate School of Translation and Interpretation of Beijing Foreign Studies University, as well as at a limited number of foreign language departments at colleges or universities in China. Furthermore, a review of related literature shows that previous studies have mainly focused on interpreting quality assessment and evaluation standards from the perspectives of both the interpreters and the clients. The need of quality assessment of interpreter education emerges from current problems facing training programs. The lack of studies on quality evaluation of simultaneous interpreting training makes the construction of evaluation system become a top priority.

With the assessment approaches and dimensions proposed in language training programs in the west as guidelines, this research puts forward a holistic evaluation framework for SI training programs, which is designed to promote SI training quality, and cultivate simultaneous interpreters to meet the market demand.

The thesis is divided into six chapters.

The first chapter introduces the research background, research purpose and the significance of this research.

The second chapter highlights Gile's Effort Model and Xiamen University's training model, which are the theoretical framework mainly implemented in SI training in China. Their pedagogical implications for SI training are also analyzed.

The third chapter elaborates on the status quo of SI training programs both at home and abroad. The problems in simultaneous interpreting training in China are also summarized in order to demonstrate the necessity of quality evaluation for SI training programs.

The fourth chapter focuses on a literature review to the parameters in evaluation which were proposed in language training programs in the west after the role of quality evaluation is analyzed. The specific explanations on the main approaches and

dimensions shed light on the design and implementation of an evaluation scheme for SI training.

The fifth chapter seeks to propose a holistic quality evaluation framework for SI training program. First, the author introduces the definition and the construction of the scheme. The implementation of the evaluation framework is composed of two parts: assessment of resources related to SI training and evaluation of syllabus design. It is advised that the qualification of the personnel and physical resources should be assessed as the first part since they are important prerequisite to successful SI training. It is also worth noting that assessment of admission standards, intermediate test as well as final examination juries in different phases of training are important factors, the outcomes of which can reflect qualification of the trainees to a certain degree. Meanwhile, core curriculum design, practicum and graduation thesis are a necessary part in evaluation of syllabus design, and play a crucial role in the improvement of the training effectiveness and usefulness.

The sixth chapter concludes the thesis by accentuating the significance of the evaluation framework for SI training.

Key words: simultaneous interpreting; SI training; quality evaluation

摘 要

随着经济和文化交流日益频繁,同声传译作为一种交流方式,在社会上的需求与日俱增。与此同时,市场对口译人才求贤若渴,大量同声传译的训练项目应运而生。然而,目前国内针对职业同传的训练主要由各高级翻译学院和有条件的外语系在研究生阶段展开。从相关文献来看,以往的研究大多针对如何制定同传质量的评估标准,但是针对同传训练的质量评估的研究却相当不足。国内同传训练的现状也存在一些问题,这使得构建一套整体的质量评估体系成为当务之急。

本文针对同传训练构建了一个整体的评估体系,以西方语言训练项目中的评估手段和方法作为指导,旨在促进同传训练的教学质量,培养出满足市场需求的优质同传人才。

本文共分为六个章节。

第一章是绪论部分,介绍了研究的背景、意义和论文的思路。

第二章主要介绍了吉尔的认知负荷模式和厦门大学的口译训练模式,这两个模式对国内的同传训练中产生了深刻的影响。此外,同步性是同声传译区别于其他口译形式的显著特点,也是在同传训练中必须要考虑的因素。

第三章着重介绍了国内外同传训练的现状,说明了西方同传训练中可供借鉴的优点。与此同时,在构建同传训练的质量评估体系时,必须联系实际,考虑到国内同声传译教学中的问题。

第四章首先给出了质量评估的定义并论述了质量评估在同传训练中作用。随后综合论述了在西方语言训练项目中用于质量评估的方法和视角,这为构建同传训练的质量评估体系奠定了基础。

第五章构建了一个全面的同传训练的质量评估体系。首先,作者给出了该计划的定义和构建。该评估体系一共由两部分组成:一是对同传教学有关资源的评估,二是对课程设计的评估。合格的师资和物质资源保障是同传训练成功的重要前提。除此之外,在不同的阶段,录取标准、中期分流、期终考核也都是评估的重要因素,而评估的结果可以在一定程度上反映出同传教学的效果。与此同时,

对核心课程的设计、实习和毕业论文的评估，在促进同传教学的有效性和实用性方面发挥着重要的作用。

第六章是结语，强调了同传训练评估体系的意义和重要性。

关键词：同声传译 同传训练 质量评估

厦门大学博硕

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Chapter One Introduction

This part introduces the research background and the significance of the thesis. The author first gives a brief introduction to simultaneous interpreting, training for simultaneous interpreting and previous research on evaluation for simultaneous interpreting training. Then the purpose of the paper will be explicitly explained, which is followed by the organization of the paper.

1.1 Research Background

Compared with interpreting which has served as a communicative tool among people speaking different languages since ancient times, simultaneous interpreting has a comparatively short history. It is after the World War II, in particular, after it's officially applied in large scale at the Nuremberg Trial in four languages, English, French, Russian and German that simultaneous interpreting has developed into a profession. Since its accession to the World Trade Organization, China has accelerated integration into global economy, which gives rise to unprecedented cooperation and exchanges between China and the rest of the world in every field. As an increasingly important interpreting form, simultaneous interpreting has been the main communication tool in international conferences in view of its features such as, time-saving, simultaneous, non-interruptive as well as highly efficient. Its extensive involvement in inter-government affairs and inter-corporate events plays a crucial role in facilitating communication between different cultures and different languages.

In this context, simultaneous interpreters are urgently needed as the rapid growth of international exhibitions or conventions held in China. Statistics from ICCA¹ show that the number of international conferences in Beijing reached 98 in 2011, ranking 12th in the world. Nonetheless, the number of qualified professional interpreters does not increase at a corresponding pace. In the short period from January 12th to 27th, demand for simultaneous interpreters for international conferences in Guangzhou

¹ ICCA: the International Congress and Convention Association, the global meetings industry network.

amounted to 30, but only a total of 20 qualified simultaneous interpreters were available. Qualified simultaneous interpreters have to be transferred from other cities to Guangzhou now and then in order to meet the demand of market because local simultaneous interpreters are so scarce with the fast growth of exhibitions or conferences in recent years.

At this backdrop, the training of simultaneous interpreters attracts much attention from both the educational field and the society. The growing need for simultaneous interpreters has given rise to a number of training courses offered by some training organizations and agencies. With the construction of MTI programs, more and more universities and colleges are offering interpreter training including simultaneous interpreting training to meet the market demand. The number of qualified simultaneous interpreters not only indicates the level of foreign language training in a region but also is a concrete manifestation of the degree of internationalization and international competitiveness of a region.

In spite of the fact that simultaneous interpreting training has attracted much attention, compared with the training programs in the west, simultaneous training in China is still in its infancy. Only a few colleges started SI training in the late 20th century. Most SI training programs in China are still in their initial stage as regards to curriculum design, training approaches, and so forth. As is known to all, it is one of the most demanding jobs to cultivate qualified simultaneous interpreters. Meanwhile, products and service of high quality are the essence of any undertaking, especially in an era of unremitting pursuit for high quality in nearly all respects of life. The same condition is also true of simultaneous interpreting market which lays much emphasizes on the qualification of interpreters as well as the quality of simultaneous interpreting services, which poses a challenge to interpreters and SI training programs.

There is an urgent need to perform quality evaluation of SI training programs. Through a holistic mechanism of quality evaluation of SI training, the outcomes of these assessments in each part can feed back into one another, therefore improving the quality of the SI training, enhancing the efficiency and usefulness of the curriculum and providing more qualified SI interpreters to meet the market demand.

According to Xiao Xiaoyan, there are five main interpreting research topics: interpreting training, language issues, cognitive issues, quality assessment and profession (Xiao, 2002). Among them, interpreting training remains the hottest topic

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